

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 3, 4 and 6-10 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 4 and 6 are amended, and claim 10 is added. The amendments and added claim introduce no new matter. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiners Saint-Cyr and Smits in the April 15, 2008 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3, 4 and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) over "HMM Size Reduction Using MDL Criterion," by Shinoda et al. (hereinafter "Shinoda"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Without conceding the interpretation, or application, of the applied reference, and solely to advance prosecution of this application, claim 1 is amended for clarity. The applied reference does not teach the combination of features recited in claim 1.

For example, as agreed during the April 15 personal interview with the Examiners, Shinoda does not teach selecting a state having the Gaussian distribution number whose description length is minimum, for every state. Applicants appreciate this agreement by the Examiners.

For at least the above reasons, the applied reference does not teach the combination of features positively recited in independent claim 1. Additionally, claims 3, 4 and 6-9 are also not taught by the applied reference for at least the respective dependence of these claims, directly or indirectly, on an allowable base claim, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 3, 4 and 6-9 are respectfully requested.

Added claim 10 is likewise allowable at least for its dependence on an allowable base claim, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that this claim recites. Support for the features of claim 10 can be found in claim 2 of the application, as filed.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3, 4 and 6-10 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: April 24, 2008

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